

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT GROVE HOUSE ON  
MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019**

**Meeting Commenced:** 7.01 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 9.03 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Alan Peak (Chairman), Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Gill Bute, Ciaran Cronnelly, David Dash, Peter Fox, Robert Payne, Marcia Pepperall, Lisa Pilgrim, Ian Porter, Tim Taylor and Helen Thornton.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Sonia Russe and John Crockford Hawley, Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk/RFO), Fay Powell (Grounds Manager), Chris Harrison (North Somerset Council), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Vicky Angear (Weston Mercury), Rachel Lewis (North Somerset Council) and Jos Holder (member of the public).

<b>129</b>	<b>To receive Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes</b>  There were no apologies of absence received.
<b>130</b>	<b>To receive Declarations of Interest</b>  There were no declarations of interest received.
<b>131</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the Policy &amp; Finance Committee meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>  The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.  <b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Ian Porter <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Robert Payne  A vote was taken and <b>carried</b> . Accordingly, it was:  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman.
<b>132</b>	<b>The minutes of the Working Party to Review Expenditure &amp; Governance</b>  The minutes had been previously circulated with the agenda.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the of the Working Party to Review Expenditure & Governance held on held on 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2019 (unapproved) be noted.
<b>133</b>	<b>Museum Roof Replacement</b> The reference from the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee held on 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 was previously circulated with the agenda.

The report of the council appointed surveyor with regards to roof and solar panel options was previously circulated with the agenda.

The report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning funding options for the Museum's flat roof was previously circulated to members.

The Town Clerk summarised the report (pg. 5) that was provided to members before the meeting. Decisions that needed to be made by members were listed as follows:

1. Whether the flat roof should be repaired or completely replaced
2. Whether solar panels should be included
3. How the works would be funded

It was noted that the cost to replace the flat roof was £119,000, and the additional cost to include solar panels was £115,000. It was estimated by the surveyor that the solar panels would pay for themselves in 9-10 years. The roof replacement and solar panels cumulatively would be £234,000. It was noted that with the replacement alone, funds could be obtained from Town Council reserves, with £55,000 EMR allocation for Museum, £27,400 HLF retention payment, and the remaining £36,600 from general reserves. The solar panels would have to be covered through applying for a Public Works Loan Board loan.

The replacement of the flat roof should be prioritised over other roofing options including the replacement of the pitched roof which could instead be covered as part of the phase 2 refurbishment.

Members agreed that solar panels were a good idea, but that they were not strictly necessary straight away. It was suggested that the use of solar panels be explored further and quotations be obtained. It was noted that the roof may need reinforcing to accommodate the solar panels.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Ian Porter

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Peter Fox

**RESOLVED:** A full replacement of the Museum roof take place at an estimated cost of £119,000 (Option B in the report) (this figure excludes the cost of any reinforcement needed to accommodate solar panels in the future which would increase the amount needed from general reserves).

*Councillor John Crockford Hawley and Rachel Lewis entered the meeting at 19.19*

A member queried whether other Town Council buildings would be suitable for solar panels, including the Blakehay Theatre and some of the Town Council toilets. It was requested that the suitability of these buildings could be reviewed and solar panels be explored across the Town Council.

**PROPOSED BY:** Councillor Ian Porter

**SECONDED BY:** Councillor Roger Bailey

	<p><b>RESOLVED: -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) To recommend to the full Town Council that Option 1.7.2.4 of the report (using internal resources) be used to fund the costs of the roof replacement and that a sum estimated at £36,600 be authorised for use from the Council's general reserves</li><li>b) That the Councils PPM programme for the year 2019 / 2020, as previously circulated at the June 2019 Policy and Finance meeting, be approved for implementation.</li></ul>
<p><b>134</b></p>	<p><b>Monthly Financial Reports: May &amp; June 2019</b></p> <p>A decision was made by the chairman to skip to 6b on the agenda in the absence of documents circulated relating to 6a (the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure.)</p> <p><b>b) For Noting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. Bank Reconciliations`</li><li>ii. Budgetary Control Report</li><li>iii. Bank Interest Report</li><li>iv. Schedule of Receipted Income</li><li>v. Income Analysis</li><li>vi. Overspend Month end report</li><li>vii. Bad debt report</li></ul> <p>With regards to vii it was noted that a debt of £67 should be written off under Financial Regulation 9.3, after having followed Town Council bad debt procedure.</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That reports 5b i – vii for be noted.</li><li>2. To note that the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO under financial regulation 9.3 had written off the sum of £67 to Misty Sylvian</li></ul> <p><b>a) For Approval</b> Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Ian Porter <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That in absence of a report approval of the Schedule of Unapproved Expenditure for May and June be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.</p>

**135**

**Consultation on Alexandra Parade**

Rachel Lewis from North Somerset Council presented the draft proposal for the redevelopment of Alexandra Parade.

The aim of the redevelopment was to encourage more pedestrian use of the town centre, as well as more cycling and use of public transport. As a result of this aim, a cycle route was to be included, as well as improved pavements which were wider and with more obvious crossing points.

The three mini roundabouts outside the town hall were to be removed to encourage a through route to the seafront via Carlton Street and to limit the amount of traffic on Oxford Street and encourage more pedestrian use as a result.

The road past the Odeon and down Regent Street would be pedestrian only apart from loading vehicles during agreed business hours.

Outside of Tesco would be a two-way bus terminus, with the taxi rank to move to the north side of Alexandra Parade which would also have two-way traffic. As a result of these changes there would be a loss in the amount of green space, with an estimated 1/3 lost. The number of trees that would be planted across the entire development would result in an increase on the total number of trees currently.

Debate ensued. The need for a crossing between Alfred Street and Locking Road was raised. The following points were made by members.

Where bus routes currently go via the sea front it is important for disabled people that buses continue to stop on the sea front.

Vehicle access to Orchard Meadows must be safeguarded.

Concern was expressed that removing the mini roundabout at the Walliscote Road/Walliscote Grove Road junction (by the former Police Station site) will cause delays for local residents driving north along Walliscote Road. Rachel Lewis advised that traffic studies had been carried out, with a 5-6-minute delay estimated during peak times.

Provision needed to be included in the bus hub for community transport buses.

It was noted that 10 parking spaces which are used by local residents in the evenings will be lost and was requested that efforts be made to find space for 10 replacement parking spaces in the town centre.

A member welcomed the semi-pedestrianisation of Regent Street and is investigating the possibility of a trial of specialist autonomous vehicles being developed at the University of the West of England along the promenade. North Somerset Council's assistance with this investigation and consideration of the possibility of extending the trial to Regent Street would be appreciated.

	<p>Rachel Lewis confirmed that the consultation for the development needed to be completed within a few weeks, with the contract to start in the new year and funds to be spent by the end of 2020. The decision concerning the development would be made by an executive member, following final presentation and comments from North Somerset Council's scrutiny panel, chaired by Councillor John Crockford Hawley.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - That the Town clerk respond to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council, summarising the main points and issues raised by members in the debate.</p>
<p><b>136</b></p>	<p><b>Christmas Lights Panel Approval</b></p> <p>A verbal report was given by the Town Clerk.</p> <p>As per resolution a panel of four members, namely Councillors Crew, Gibbons, Peak and Russe, had been convened to select the new company for Christmas Lights displays. Seven interviews had taken place over two days and been scored, and the Surveyor's technical assessment score taken into account, after which a unanimous decision had been made to appoint Gala Lights Limited. Gala Lights were a well-established company part of Leblanc Illuminations and headquartered in Kent but with a team of engineers based in the South West.</p> <p>The new lights would be extended across more areas including the Italian Gardens and Orchard Street, subject to landowner consent. Lights would also be put on Town Council buildings including Weston Museum and the Blakehay Theatre. A member of the panel commented that as part of Leblanc Illuminations the company manufactured their own lights.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Ian Porter  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Robert Payne</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the decision of the selection panel be adopted and Gala Lights Limited be approved as the new contractor for Christmas Lights for a contract period of 3 years.</p>
<p><b>137</b></p>	<p>Item 10 on the agenda was moved up to accommodate for the attendance of Chris Harrison from North Somerset Council.</p> <p><b>CCTV Review</b></p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk and letter from North Somerset Council had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Chris Harrison from North Somerset Council CCTV team presented to the Meeting and advised that the current CCTV system in place throughout Weston was analogue and therefore out of date. North Somerset Council requested that, in principle, Weston super Mare Town Council confirm continued revenue support for the towns CCTV and also requested a</p>

contribution on the capital costs of updating the system.

The Town Clerk put forward suggestions in his report for four conditions to attach to any agreement in principle to fund CCTV upgrading.

Chris Harrison advised that the current CCTV system had become obsolete 8 years ago. A new system would allow for additional features including auto number plate recognition, auto facial recognition and a crystal clear image. It was noted that there was no intention initially to use these features but that they would be available in the future if necessary.

Without capital support from Weston-super-Mare Town Council the upgrade could not take place and the system would be likely to fail eventually. An agreement in principle would allow North Somerset Council (NSC) to explore costs, as they would be unknown until procurement took place. Lincolnshire had recently had their system upgraded and the cost was around £400,000. The amount per camera would not change, only the initial costs. 68 cameras in Weston needed to be upgraded.

Debate ensued. A member queried what the Town Council funding has gone towards if the current system had been obsolete for 8 years. It was clarified that the current systems still worked, but out of date.

NSC would pay the majority share. This amount would not be known until procurement had taken place but it was envisaged it would be at least 50%. It had always been the intention of NSC to involve the Town Council in the process.

*Councillor Ray Armstrong left the meeting at 20:19*

It was queried why the annual cost would not be going down if the new system would be easier to maintain. Chris Harrison advised that the revenue support provided by the Town Council mainly funded running costs and staffing.

*Councillor Ray Armstrong re-entered the meeting at 20:21*

Members agreed with the Town Clerk's recommendations. They queried why WTC's contribution was considerably large compared to other North Somerset towns. It was clarified that the costings would be worked out based on the breakdown of cameras across North Somerset as follows:

Portishead: 5 cameras  
Nailsea: 12 cameras  
Clevedon: 9 cameras  
Weston-super-Mare: 68 cameras

In response to a question it was confirmed that procurement for the service would take about 6 months.

The Town Clerk noted that the fee currently for revenue costs was £80,000 a year. The Town Council's share of capital costs, if agreed were likely to

	<p>be around £100,000 or more. Members had to make decisions on the continued revenue support, the additional capital costs, and if agreed, any conditions they wished to attach to those capital costs.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised that there was no budget for this additional capital cost. With £36,000 previously agreed for the Museum roof repairs from general reserves, the reserves were now likely to be under the level recommended in the council's financial regulations. Consideration would need to be given on how to budget for this. She reiterated that direction was essential from members as any future capital support would need to be identified within the council's budget setting process for 2020-2021 which would be prepared for December 2019 and finally approved in January 2020. This was in advance of any outcomes of the NSC procurement process which was not likely to be completed until April 2020 given the 6 month advised procurement timescale provided.</p> <p>A member queried whether Weston needed 68 cameras, and whether existing cameras are in the right place and suggested that this be reviewed. The Grounds Manager suggested looking at areas where cameras had not been working, and whether they have been necessary since they had stopped working.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To give commitment in principle to the Town Council continuing to fund a proportion as at present of the revenue costs of CCTV; and in principle to fund a similar proportion of the capital cost of a new CCTV system; both subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full involvement at all stages of the tender process for a new system</li> <li>2. The final capital and revenue costs of the new system being at an acceptable level</li> <li>3. Full statistics and anonymised crime details per camera being available</li> <li>4. The town council's agreement being required for all permanent cameras and camera removals in the parish</li> <li>5. Any revenue savings from the new system to be carried through proportionately to the Town Council</li> </ol> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk again reiterated there still needed to be direction for budget provision, advising that any increase in the precept would mean a reduction in services.</p>
<p><b>138</b></p>	<p><b>Committee terms of reference</b>  The report of the Town Clerk had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>An informal meeting of Councillors had been called to discuss committee structure. The main issue had been with the Community Services Committee, with the remit too large to deal with agenda items in an appropriate time. The Town Clerk had suggested two options, the one which had found favour was that the Blakehay Theatre and Weston</p>

	<p>Museum no longer report to Community Services, and instead report to the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee converted into a full committee to be renamed the Museum and Culture Committee. Membership of this committee would need to be increased from 6 to 9 members.</p> <p>Councillors Peter Fox and Helen Thornton put themselves forward as candidates to be added to this committee.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Ray Armstrong  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> - to make the following recommendations to the Town Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That responsibility for the Weston Museum and the Blakehay Theatre be removed from the Community Services Committee's terms of reference.</li> <li>2. That the Museum and Heritage Sub Committee be renamed the Museum and Culture Committee reporting direct to the Council, with responsibility for the Blakehay Theatre transferred to it.</li> <li>3. The new Museum and Culture Committee be increased in number of Members from 6 to 9 (plus the existing co-opted non-voting membership) and accordingly an additional member from each political group be appointed.</li> </ol>
<p><b>139</b></p>	<p><b>Ellenborough Park West</b>  The report of the Town Clerk had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that Ellenborough Park West was owned by the Catholic Diocese of Clifton. It had been closed to the public for some time, with Corpus Christi Primary School unable to use the park as their playing field due to health and safety concerns. Corpus Christi Church had approached the town council, which already owned and maintained the Ellenborough East Park, to take on the West Park on a long lease.</p> <p>There would be some maintenance costs to taking the park on, including cutting the grass and the implications of the SSSI needed to be investigated. The park could potentially be hired out as an events space and help to generate some compensating income. The Town Clerk recommended members as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve, in principle, the objective of the Town Council taking on Ellenborough East Park and opening it to the public</li> <li>2. To approve further discussions with the Diocese to explore possible terms (subject to contract) for the Town Council taking on the Park in a long lease enabling parish, school and public use</li> <li>3. To arrange for a tree survey and a financial assessment to be carried out and clarify the status and any restrictions imposed by the SSSI</li> <li>4. That the results of the discussions and investigations be reported back to members prior to any commitment being entered into.</li> </ol> <p>Debate ensued. Members supported the ideas, saying that it would be a good asset for the community.</p>



	<p>The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that a Grounds Review was currently taking place to find more efficient ways of working with Grounds Team and initial findings indicated that any additional costs from taking on the park should be able to be contained within existing costs. It was suggested that any additional costs therefore be identified and included in this review.</p> <p>It was suggested that a feasibility study could be carried out. Another member expressed the contrary view, that the council should not take on the park because it is another cost. Overall it was felt that the option should be explored further but not agreed in principle at this stage.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Robert Payne  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Fox</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: -</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve further discussions with the Diocese to explore possible terms (subject to contract) for the Town Council taking on the Park in a long lease enabling parish, school and public use</li> <li>2. To arrange for a tree survey and a financial assessment to be carried out and clarify the status and any restrictions imposed by the SSSI</li> <li>3. That the results of the discussions and investigations be reported back to members prior to any commitment being entered into.</li> </ol>
<p><b>140</b></p>	<p><b>Telecoms Upgrade</b></p> <p>The report of the Finance Officer had been circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A telecoms upgrade had been requested via the council's Leadership Team of managers who felt a more advanced system was required. The current telecom contract did not require renewal for another 18 months. Termination of this contract early would need approval from the Policy and Finance Committee.</p> <p>It was suggested that this be reviewed at a later meeting.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: -</b> Members agreed to defer this decision to a future meeting as and when deemed necessary by the Town Clerk.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:03 pm</p>

Signed..... Dated.....

Chairman